



Forest Heights Police Department Policy and Procedures Manual

Subject:	Code of Professional Responsibility			
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A. Purpose

To establish a basic ethical framework in which the law enforcement officer is expected to operate in order to advance the profession and protect the constitutional rights and liberties of the public. All officers of the Forest Heights Police Department (FHPD) will display the high degree of integrity required by the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics. For purposes of this manual, the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics, which follows, is adopted as a rule.

B. Officer's Oath

"As a law enforcement officer, my fundamental duty is to serve mankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the constitutional rights of all men to liberty, equality, and justice."

"I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all; maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in thought and deed in both my personal and official life, I will be exemplary in obeying the law of the land and the regulations of my department. Whatever I see or hear of a confidential nature or that is confided to me in my official capacity will be kept ever secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of duty."

"I will never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudice, animosities, or friendships to influence my decisions with no compromise for crime and with relentless prosecutions of criminals. I will enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear of favor, malice; or ill will, never employing unnecessary force or violence and never accepting gratuities."

"I recognize the badge of my office as a symbol of public faith, and I accept it as a public trust to be held so long as I am true to the ethics of police service. I will constantly strive to achieve these objectives and ideals, dedicating myself before God to my chosen profession - law enforcement."

C. Responsibilities

1. All officers of the FHPD will, at all times, within Forest Height Town limits, prevent crime, preserve the peace, protect life and property, detect and arrest violators of the law, and enforce the laws of the United States, State of Maryland, and all Town ordinances, in accordance with the rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and orders of the Town and the FHPD. Officers will be ever conscious that when they act under "color of law", that the phrase includes not only laws, but also policies, procedures, ordinances, common usage, and custom.
2. Employees of the FHPD will obey all federal and state laws. They will also obey all laws and ordinances of the city/town or county in which the employees may be present. Employees will obey all rules, regulations, directives and orders, as may be issued by the Department. The term "employees" includes both sworn and non-sworn personnel.
3. Employees of the FHPD will obey all lawful orders issued to them by competent authority. Supervisory officers of the Department will not knowingly or willfully issue any order in violation of any law or ordinance or of any rule, regulation, policy or procedure of the FHPD.
4. To permit effective supervision, direction, and control, employees should promptly obey any lawful rank. In the event an employee is given two apparently lawful but different orders that may be in conflict, the last order given should be complied with unless the order is retracted or modified.

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In the event an employee receives conflicting orders; the employee should inform the person giving the last order of the conflict of orders. That person giving the conflicting order should then resolve the conflict by either retracting, modifying or requesting the employee to comply with the latest order. In the event the conflicting order is not altered or retracted, the employee will not be held responsible for disobedience of the order or directive previously issued.

5. No employee of the FHPD is required to obey any order, which is contrary to the laws of the United States, State of Maryland, or ordinances of the Town; however, such refusal to obey is the responsibility of the employee, and he/she will be required to justify his/her action.

D. Rules

Purpose: To establish a basic ethical framework in which the law enforcement officer is expected to operate in order to advance the profession and protect the constitutional rights and liberties of the public.

RULE 1: A law enforcement officer's fundamental duty is to serve mankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the Constitutional Rights of all-men to Liberty, Equality and Justice.

RULE 2: A law enforcement officer must remain courageous and calm in the face of danger, scorn or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. Honest in both thought and deed in both personal and official life, he/she will be exemplary in obeying the laws of the land and the regulations of this department. Whatever an officer sees or hears of a confidential nature, or is confided in his/her official capacity will be kept secret unless revelation is necessary in the performance of his/her duty.

RULE 3: A law enforcement officer must never act officiously or permit personal feelings, prejudices, animosities or friendships to influence his/her decisions.

RULE 4: A law enforcement officer must enforce the law courteously and appropriately without fear or favor, malice or ill will.

RULE 5: A law enforcement officer will only employ necessary force in making an arrest.

RULE 6: A law enforcement officer must not accept any gifts or gratuities from anyone other than family members. A cup of coffee is not considered anything of value.

RULE 7: Officers will not drink any intoxicating beverage while on-duty or off-duty if he/she is attired in the uniform of the FHPD. Only the Chief of Police, ranking officer, or ranking division/unit officer may exempt officers working undercover or special assignment from this rule, if his/her presence in a bar is crucial to the investigation.

RULE 8: Officers, without regard to rank, will respect and defer to any officer who is processing any law enforcement scene or who arrives at a crime and/or arrest scene prior to their arrival. Relinquishing of the scene shall be initiated by the officer initiating processing of any given law enforcement scene or crime and/or arrest scene.